

**GRAPHIC CHATTING WITH ORGANIZATIONAL AVATARS**  
**Kyunam Kim**

**ABSTRACT**

5 A new class of avatars ("organizational avatars") created in accordance with the  
present invention holds a value or a significance independent from their use in a virtual  
environment, unlike the generic avatars whose value is limited to their being used in a  
chatroom. For example, an organizational avatar may be in the image of a trademark (which  
10 may be copyrighted), such as Mickey Mouse, Colonel Sanders, or Pikachu (a Pokemon  
character). The organizational avatars may represent certain organizations, typically the  
organizations that own trademark and/or copyright rights to the images used to form the  
avatars in virtual environments. Therefore, users of virtual environments can interface  
various companies by interacting with organizational avatars. Alternatively, organizational  
15 avatars may represent users independent of the organization, but under a contract with the  
organization that owns the image the avatars depict. By using organizational avatars,  
companies of all sizes can increase their interactivity with customers, advertise cost  
effectively, and promote a positive image for their products. Tiles are used to provide faster  
download of a chatroom's background. Tiles also allow rapid generation of a chatroom's  
background, eliminating the need to use a graphics editor.

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